

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health
for the year ended 31st December, 1952.

To the Chairman and Members of the Norton-Radstock Urban
District Council.

Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit my annual report on the sanitary conditions
and health of your District for the year ended 31st December, 1952.

SECTION A.

(1) Area (in acres)	3,360.
(2) Population (estimated)...	12,020.
(3) Number of inhabited houses ...	3,656.
(4) Rateable Value (at 31/12/52)...	£46,359.
(5) Sum represented by a penny rate	£190.
(6) Chief Industries:-	

Coal Mining
Agriculture
Paper Bag making
Printing
Glove making
Wagon Repair Works
Timber Constructional Works
Boot and Shoe making.

Unemployment..

The figures, of those unemployed, at the Midsomer Norton Labour
Exchange, per month, were approximately the following:-

Men 30; Women 3.

It should be noted that the Midsomer Norton Exchange now serves the
whole area.

Prescribed Particulars in the Administration of the Factories Act, 1937.

Part I of the Act.

- (1) Inspections for the purposes of provisions as to health (including
inspections made by Sanitary Inspectors).

	<u>Premises</u>	<u>Number on</u> <u>Register</u>	<u>Inspec-</u> <u>tions</u>	<u>Number of</u>	
				<u>Written</u> <u>notices</u>	<u>Occupiers</u> <u>prosecuted</u>
(i) Factories in which Sections 1,2,3,4 & 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities		45	34	-	-
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by Local Authorities		11	11	-	-
(iii) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by Local Authorities (Excluding outworkers' premises)		16	51	-	-
TOTAL		72	96	-	-
		====	=====	=====	=====



(2) Cases in which defects were found:-

Particulars	Number of cases in which defects were found			
	Found	Remedied	Referred To By H.M. Inspector	
Want of cleanliness	1	1	0	0
Overcrowding	0	0	0	0
Unreasonable temperature	0	0	0	0
Inadequate ventilation	0	0	0	0
Ineffective draining of floors	0	0	0	0
Sanitary Conveniences:-				
(a) Insufficient	0	0	0	0
(b) Unsuitable or defective	2	2	0	2
(c) Not separate for sexes	0	0	0	0
	3	3	0	2

Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted - NIL.

Part VIII of the Act.

Outwork - Section 110.

<u>Nature of Work</u>	<u>No. of Outworkers in August</u>
	<u>List required by Section 110(1)(c)</u>
Wearing apparel manufacture	133

There was one case of default in sending lists to the Council.

Vital Statistics. (Figures in parenthesis are comparative figures for England and Wales).

Births.

	<u>Boys</u>	<u>Girls</u>	<u>Total.</u>
Live Births:-			
Legitimate	101	88	189
Illegitimate	1	1	2
	102	89	191
Still Births:-			
Legitimate	3	2	5
Illegitimate	0	0	0
	3	2	5

The birth rate per 1,000 of the estimated population was 15.9 (15.3).

Deaths.

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total.</u>
	67	61	128
Death rate per 1,000 of the estimated population	...	...	10.6 (11.3)
Death rate from puerperal causes	...	...	0.0
Death rate of infants under 1 year of age:-			
All infants per 1,000 live births	...	...	36.6 (27.6)
Legitimate infants per 1,000 live births	...	...	37.0
Illegitimate infants per 1,000 live births	...	...	0.0

Deaths (Contd).

Deaths in infants under 1 year of age:-

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
Under 1 week	3	1
1 - 4 weeks	0	0
1 - 6 months	0	0
6 - 12 months	3	0

Causes of deaths in infants under 1 year of age:-

Prematurity	2
Congenital Malformation	1
Birth Injury	1
Broncho Pneumonia	1
Tuberculosis	1
Intussusception	1

Causes of Deaths were:-

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
Tuberculosis	1	1
Syphilis	1	0
Cancer	8	10
Diabetes Mellitus	0	3
Vascular Lesions of the Nervous System	6	8
Coronary Heart Disease	10	7
Hypertension with Heart Disease	2	4
Other Diseases of the Heart	6	16
Other Circulatory Disease	6	3
Influenza	1	1
Pneumonia	6	1
Bronchitis	2	1
Silicosis	2	0
Gastric or Duodenal Ulceration	2	0
Nephritis	3	1
Prostatic Disease	2	0
Congenital Malformation	1	0
Other defined or ill-defined diseases	5	5
Accident	1	0
Suicide	2	0
	-----	-----
	67	61
	=====	=====

TOTAL - 128

SECTION B.

General provision of Health Services for the Area:-

1. Public Health Officers of the Authority:-

- (a) Sanitary Inspector and Housing Officer.
- (b) Surveyor and Water Engineer.
- (c) Temporary Medical Officer of Health (Part-time).

2. (a) Laboratory Facilities.

Provided by the County Laboratory, Taunton and by the newly opened laboratory at Bath. The latter laboratory is at a more convenient distance to serve this area.

(b) Ambulance Facilities.

Under the control of the Health Department of the County Council, Taunton. The service is good. The local staff are very cooperative and helpful.

A car service is also provided for those patients requiring /transport

transport to hospital and who are unfit to use public services. Some of the vehicles are not as comfortable as could be wished. Some people are reluctant to accept the fact that the use of this service depends on medical need alone.

(c) Nursing in the Home.

The District Nurses continue their valuable work.

The Home Help service satisfies an essential need.

It is still, on occasions, difficult to arrange for married women to have adequate rest.

(d) Treatment Centres and Clinics.

(i) Tuberculosis

The County Clinic at Radstock carries on its important work. It is not considered, however, that this disease is being adequately tackled on a national basis.

Further visits from the Mass Radiography Unit would be welcomed.

(ii) Venereal Disease

The nearest clinics are at Bath and Bristol.

The arrangements meet present needs.

(iii) Infant and Child Welfare Services

Good work continues in unsuitable premises.

(iv) Maternity Services

The service provided, by the Nurses at home, and by Paulton Hospital Maternity Unit, is good.

(v) Dental Treatment

No dental service for young children and expectant mothers is yet available in this immediate area. This should be provided by the County Health Authority.

The dental charges introduced during the year in the National Health Service, and especially the method of their application, are deplored.

(vi) Mental Treatment

The service for mental patients is run by the County Health Authorities.

(vii) No action has been taken under the National Assistance Act, 1948.

(e) Hospital Cases.

When necessary, Claverton Down Hospital admits cases of infectious disease from this area.

It is considered that the Emergency Bed Bureau is working satisfactorily for the admission of urgent cases.

The staff of the Hospital Management Committee do what is possible, but it is desirable that the admission of chronic sick should be hastened.

In a few specialities the waiting period for out-patient appointments is excessive, though for the rest this state of affairs fortunately no longer applies.

(f) General Health Services.

The continued division of patients into paying and non-paying classes is disliked. It is considered that the National Health Service should be free at the time of use.

3. The Elderly.

Little progress seems to have been made this year in welfare services for old people.

SECTION C.

Sanitary circumstances of this District:-

(1) Water.

Sources of supply:-

- (i) The Bottlehead Springs at Downhead.
- (ii) Downside and Gurney Slade Springs.
- (iii) Chilcompton Springs.

The supply has been satisfactory in quality, and, as a general rule, in quantity also.

It is proposed, at a future date, to augment the supply from the Chew Stoke Reservoir (Bristol Waterworks Company).

Tests of Raw water during the year have all been satisfactory.

The water has no plumbo-solvent action.

No form of contamination is known and all supplies are chlorinated.

With very few exceptions, all houses are directly supplied from the mains.

(2) Swimming Bath.

The water is by Council supply and is chlorinated.

Eight samples of water were taken and all were satisfactory.

(3) Sanitation.

Two modern sewage disposal plants serve the District.

During the year extensions were made to the housing estates at Northfield, Westfield and Haydon.

Future Proposals.

It is proposed to sewer the Thicketmead area, Midsomer Norton to replace septic tanks at an approximate cost of £20,000.

There are eighteen pail closets in the District and 3,500 water closets. There were no conversions carried out during the year.

Many of the older terrace-type houses have shared lavatories. Of these houses, a considerable proportion are classed as unfit.

(4) Camping Sites.

Licences have been issued for the use of three sites for temporary occupation. It is estimated that there are two permanent and six seasonal people camping.

/Housing

Housing.

	Houses Erected during year.		Houses in Course of Erection.		Conversion to Flats or Dwellings.		Temporary i.e. Army Huts etc.
	Perm.	Temp.	Perm.	Temp.	Perm.	Temp.	
Local Authority	49	-	24	-	-	-	-
Private Enterprise	7	-	9	-	-	-	-
TOTALS	56	-	33	-	-	-	-

The total number of houses in the District is estimated to be 3,694, of which 737 are owned by the local authority.

Number of Post-war Houses erected to 31st December, 1952.		Programme for 1953.	
By Local Authority	By P. Enterprise	By Local Authority	By P. Enterprise
295	50	86	42

- | | | | |
|--|-----|-----|-------------------|
| (a) Number of unfit houses in the District, but on which no formal action has been taken | ... | ... | 366 (substandard) |
| (b) Number of houses that have been condemned under the Housing Acts as totally unfit | ... | ... | 40 |
| (c) Number of houses occupied under (a) | ... | ... | 366 |
| (b) | ... | ... | 19 |
| (d) Number of houses found overcrowded | ... | ... | 113 |

Houses Required.

- | | | | | |
|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| (i) To replace those unfit under (a) | ... | ... | ... | 366 |
| (b) | ... | ... | ... | 19 |
| (ii) To abate overcrowding | ... | ... | ... | 8 |
| (iii) To overcome unsatisfactory conditions, e.g. two families living in same house, but not included in (i) or (ii) | ... | ... | ... | 160 |
| Total number of applicants for Council houses at end of year | ... | ... | ... | 480 |

The three hundred and sixty-six substandard houses are as agreed under the Development plan. They are habitable, but it is not considered that they can be modernised at reasonable cost. It is expected they will be dealt with during the next twenty years.

Grants made under the Housing Act, 1949.

No grants were made under the Housing Act, 1949, no applications being received.

SECTION D.

Food.

I. Milk.

- | | | | |
|---|-----|-----|----|
| (a) Number of Registered Distributors | ... | ... | 12 |
| (Not including supplementary licences). | | | |
| (b) Number of Registered Dairy Premises | ... | ... | 12 |
| (c) Number of supplementary licences issued to Distributors whose dairies are outside the area. | ... | ... | 3 |

/Sampling.

I. Milk. (contd).

Sampling.

	<u>Samples Taken</u>	<u>Satisfactory</u>	<u>Unsatisfactory</u>
Tuberculin Tested	6	5	1
Pasteurized	66	66	0

It is hoped that the number of Tuberculin Tested herds will increase.

II. Ice-cream.

Two premises are registered for the manufacture and sale of ice-cream and thirty-eight for retail only.

No samples were taken this year. Since the County Council now have a laboratory at Bath, it will be possible to have samples analysed. Previously this could not be done on account of distance.

III. Meat.

There are four slaughter-houses in the District for emergency and pig slaughtering.

They are:-

at Midsummer Norton	...	...	2
at Westfield	...	...	1
at Radstock	...	...	1

There are no slaughter-houses here for the slaughtering of horses for human consumption.

Eighty-eight animals were slaughtered during the year.

The following weights of meat were condemned from shops:-

For Tuberculosis	...	...	...	0 cwts - 62 lbs.
For other causes	...	...	...	2 cwts - 0 lbs.

IV. Premises where Food is Handled or Prepared

The number of premises registered under Section 14 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1938 31

No action has been taken under this Act.

Occasional attacks from food poisoning are reported from individual homes, probably due to isolated cases of carelessness, but no serious outbreak has occurred.

V. Knackers Yards.

There are none in this District.

VI. Chemical and Bacteriological Examination of Food.

The County Laboratories carry out any examination requested.

None has been made this year.

VII. Nutrition.

The level of the health and physique of the children generally is considered satisfactory.

SECTION E.

Notifiable Diseases.

The following cases of infectious diseases (excluding Tuberculosis) were notified during the year:-

Notifiable Diseases. (contd).

<u>Disease</u>	<u>Total Cases Notified.</u>	<u>Cases admitted to Isolation Hospital</u>	<u>Total Deaths.</u>
Measles	1	0	0
Scarlet Fever	8	0	0
Puerperal Pyrexia	2	1	0
Meningitis (Meningococcal)	1	1	0
Whooping Cough	47	0	0
Pneumonia (Influenzal)	1	1	1
Erysipelas	6	0	0
Food Poisoning	2	0	0
Glandular Fever	1	0	0

Vaccination.

No vaccinations have been performed by the Medical Officer of Health under the Public Health (Smallpox Prevention) Regulations, 1907.

It cannot be considered that the perilously poor vaccination state has improved during the year although the figures show a slight increase.

Numbers vaccinated during the year:-

Age groups	Under 1 year	1-2 years	2-4 years	5-14 years	15 or over.	Totals
Primary Vacc'n.	14	6	3	3	12	38
Re-vaccination.	0	0	0	1	19	29

Diphtheria.

No cases were notified during the year.

Immunization.

Age groups	Under 1 year	1-4 years	5-14 years	Total
Numbers	86	52	7	145

17 Reinforcing inoculations were given during the year.

The approximate number of children in this District is:-

0 - 4 years ... 960
5 - 14 years ... 1,700

Scabies.

The few cases that occur are treated by the family doctors.

Tuberculosis.

	<u>Total cases Notified</u>	<u>Total deaths</u>
Respiratory	8	1
Non-respiratory	2	1

It is considered that, on a national basis, there is room for a far more energetic attack on this disease.

My thanks are due to my colleagues for their great and essential help in preparing this report.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient Servant,

(Signed) A.H. BULLEID, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH